Forests, livelihoods and power relations in North-West Pakistan: Introduction, insights gained and challenges ahead

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1 Forests, Livelihoods and Power Relations in North-West Pakistan: Introduction, Insights Gained and Challenges Ahead

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1.1 The issue

This book is concerned with three main questions:

- Why are the remaining natural forests in Pakistan's Khyber Pakthunkwa (KP) Province (former North-West Frontier Province, NWFP) under so heavy pressure that many fear their extinction? (A major portion of natural forests of Pakistan are located in its KP, and thus the focus of this edited volume.)
- Who defines sustainable forest governance? What is being done, and by whom, to overcome the pressures on remaining forests to find a more sustainable form of forest use – and what are the experiences with these efforts so far?
- What are the challenges faced today – and which are potential ways forward towards a more sustainable forestry?

The insights presented in this book mainly emerged through research by the *Pakistan Research Group* of the Swiss National Center for Competence in Research (NCCR) North-South.[1] Other researchers, who also worked on the broad theme of forests, livelihoods and power relations, were invited to contribute as well.

First of all, this book takes a social science perspective to natural forests. Forests supply a range of resources that are important to many groups of people – timber, firewood, forest soil to utilize for agricultural activities, ecological functions, pasture areas, etc. A social science perspective reminds us that some social groups may be interested in specific forest-based resources. Others may be interested in the same, and thus compete for these resources, while still others may even like to prevent the use of a specific resource. Thus, the use of forests has a considerable potential for social conflicts – and the present book proposes to specifically analyse these conflicts to find explanations for continued overexploitation of the forests in KP. With this, it also proposes to go beyond more traditional explanations of deforestation such as population pressure or ignorance.

[1] NCCR North-South is a long term programme of the Swiss National Science Foundation, and is based on a network of partnerships with research institutions in the South and East, focusing on the analysis and mitigation of negative consequences of global change and globalization. The Pakistan Research Group of NCCR focuses on the analysis of livelihood constraints and options of people living in the highlands and adjoining lowlands of North-West Pakistan, with special attention to the institutional context that supports or hinders people in securing and improving their lives. For details see http://www.nccr-pakistan.org.

Before exploring these statements further, a brief overview on the characteristics of natural forests in the study region is provided in the next section followed by the legal classification of forests (section 1.3). Then, section 1.4 sketches the primary causes of pressures on forests, and explores these further in sections 1.5 and 1.6. Later sections deal with issues and challenges regarding forest governance. Within these different sections, the papers presented in the present edited volume are adequately located and introduced.

1.2 Natural forests in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province

'Forests' in Pakistan have a contested definition. Generally it is accepted that the area under the administrative control of a provincial Forest Department is classified as forest. However in practice, one finds that various provinces of Pakistan are using their own definitions and criteria to collect the data on and around forests. The definitional problem partly arises due to the great variety of tree species existing in Pakistan because of the country's physiographic and climatic contrasts. Mangroves forests along coastal belt of Sindh and Balochistan, farm forests in Punjab and coniferous forests in KP, Punjab, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) are some of the examples of various forests types in Pakistan. The data on all these types of forests is collected, aggregated and then reported as national figure on forests.

Forest types and coverage: Important forest types across Pakistan include (FSMP, 1992):

- 1.92 million ha of hill coniferous forests (46% of the total forests), e.g. *Pinus roxburgii, Pinus wallichiana, Abies pindrow* (fir*), Picea smithiana* (spruce), *Cedrus deodara* (Deodar) with patches of broadleaved forests (e.g. *Quercus dilatata, Juglans regia*) in moist valleys,
- 1.19 million ha scrub or foot hill forests (28% of the total forests comprise mainly of dry thorn forests and dry subtropical broad leave trees),
- 0.103 million ha irrigated plantations, major species include Shisham *(Dalbergia sisso)*, Eucalyptus (*camaldulensis)* and Poplar (*Populus* spp.),
- 0.466 million ha farmland trees, mainly eucalyptus and poplar,
- 0.173 million ha riverain forests, mainly Shisham *(Dalbergia sisso) and* Babul *(Acacia nilotica),*
- 0.207 million ha mangroves in the delta of Indus river,
- and 0.161 million ha miscellaneous plantations.

It is in the above mentioned definitional context that forests, scrubs or trees planted on farm lands cover only 5.01% of the total land area[2] ranking it under Low Forest Cover Countries (Govt. of Pakistan, 2008) when compared with the world average of 30.3 percent. It is also low when compared with Asian average of 18.5 percent of the total land area. The forest area of Pakistan is even lower as compared to the South Asian countries of the region, for example in Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, India and Bangladesh, forest area is, 68, 30, 25.4, 22.8 and 6.7 percent respectively of the total land area of these countries (FAO, 2007). Indeed, Pakistan

[2] Whereas, according to FAO (2007), forests occupy only 2.5% of the total land area of Pakistan.

suffers from far more severe forest scarcity than most other countries. The forest and woodland area per person (0.03 ha) is one of the world's lowest and most forests are slow growing. Yet Pakistan's demands on its forests and dependence of local people on forests are high and getting higher (FSMP, 1992; Iqbal, 2000).

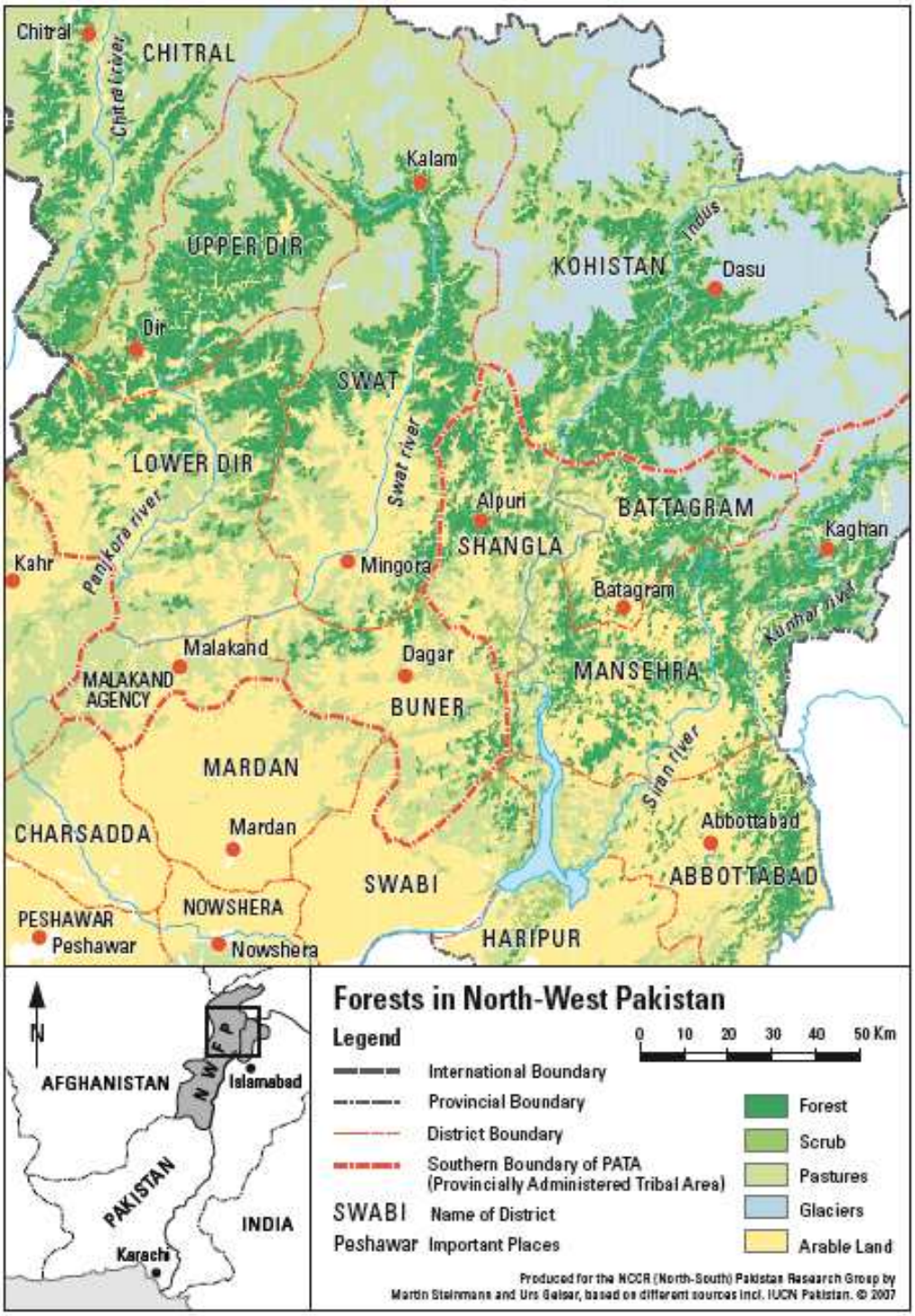
Within Pakistan's geography, natural forests are distributed very unequally among the country's provinces (FSMP, 1992): Punjab 0.608 million hectares (ha), North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) 1.684 million ha, Sindh 0.40 million ha, Balochistan 0.59 million ha, Azad Kashmir 0.275 million ha, and Northern Areas (Gilgit-Baltistan) 0.666 million ha. This shows that most of the country's forests are found in the northern part (40 percent in KP, 15.8 percent in Gilgit-Baltistan and six percent in Azad Kashmir). About 17% of the KP is forested with trees of varying density and age. The main types of forests in this region are; coniferous forest (Himalayan moist temperate and sub-tropical pine forests), scrub forest (sub -tropical broad-leaved evergreen forest, *mazri* forest), linear plantations, and trees on private lands (FSMP, 1992). See map in Figure 1.

KP forest statistics: There is considerable variation in the forest statistics of Khyber Pakthunkwa Province given by different sources. As mentioned earlier, the problem comes, among others, from the legal definition of forests. Survey methods also differ. Among the various figures offered, we specifically mention three groups:

- The areas officially designated as under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department, based on the prescription of the forest laws: 'Forest' means a tract of land mostly or predominantly covered with trees and woody vegetation, and declared as forest by Government ..." (Govt. of NWFP, 2002: 2(16)). Many areas officially called 'forests' (under the administrative control of provincial forest department) may not have any tree, on the other hand considerable tree cover may be found in the areas other than designated forests.
- The data emerging from the Forest Sector Master Plan 1992, and the National Forest and Range Resources Study 2004. These two surveys used the same classification scheme.
- The data by the Provincial Forest Resources Inventory (PFRI, 2000).

Forests in the KP are under heavy pressure, though the magnitude of the problem is disputed. A German-supported survey projected in the late 1990s that "[using] relevant growth parameters on demand and supply developments and excluding areas that are inaccessible for any wood supply (25% of the total forest area) the total forest stock [of the North-West Frontier Province] that existed in 1995 would be completely consumed sometimes between the years 2015 and 2025" (PFRI, 2000).

Figure 1: Forest map of Northern KP (Source: Based on inputs from IUCN Pakistan)



1.3 Legal classification of forests in KP – the view of the State

Within the institutional context of the modern nation state of Pakistan, legislation describes 85% of the forests of KP as public or state forests. These state forests are further divided into classes on the basis of the legal protection provided to them, i.e. (FSMP, 1992):[3]

- ***Reserved forests:*** This is the strictest tenure class in which the local people have very limited rights. The law prohibits encroachments upon such land, the construction of buildings, "(...) exercise the right of trespass, graze, browse, pasture or drive cattle, or permit cattle to trespass, or cut grass, or enter into a fenced enclosure (...), set fire, quarry stone, etc." (Govt. of NWFP, 2002: para 26).
- In the ***protected forests***, the government can declare trees as reserved, or parts of the forests. Local people are allowed fuelwood collection and timber extraction (with prior permission from the Forest Department) for their personal needs. They also have 60-80 percent share in the timber sale proceeds as royalty.
- ***Resumed lands*** (or forests) are the lands surrendered by big landlords in Hazara Division of KP during the land reforms of 1959.
- ***Un-classed forests*** include those (few) forests which are owned by the government but have not been notified as reserved or protected forests.

The non-public or non-state forests are under varying degrees of government control. They are divided into five categories (FSMP, 1992):

- ***Guzara*** (a local word used for subsistence) forests are private forests held either individually (by families), or jointly (by villagers). However, these forests are managed by the Forest Department, except for a short period of time (1981–1992) when they were managed by forest cooperative societies (Hassan, 2001). In *guzara* forests the owners or right-holders are entitled to use the forest wood for domestic purpose, while non-right holders take permission from the owners for certain uses e.g., grazing of animals, collection of firewood etc. (Ahmed and Mahmood,1998; Steimann, 2003).
- Communal forests or ***shamlat*** (a local word used for community resource) are sub-categories of the *guzara* forests, where the forest is owned by the entire village (Suleri, 2002).
- **Chos Act** are privately-owned lands which are subject to erosion hazard. Under Chos Act 1900, such areas can be taken over by the government. These areas may be returned to the owners after treatment.
- **Section 38 forests** are those forests that are offered by the owners to the forest departments for afforestation and management for an agreed period, ranging from 10 to 20 years, under Section 38 of the Forest Act, 1927. The forest officer then manages such land on the owner's behalf as a reserved or protected forest, on such terms as may be mutually agreed.

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[3] For the historic processes that led to these classifications, see chapter 2 of this book.

- The **farm forest** areas are linear or compact plantings of trees on private farm lands. These trees are owned individually or jointly by a family.

Nevertheless, according to the constitution of Pakistan, the management and planning of all types of forests (either state or private), except farm forest areas, is responsibility of the provincial forest departments. But there is a widening gap between the legal status of forests and the actual practice of forest management in different categories. A main argument that we will develop throughout this book is the difference between these state-based legal classifications *(de jure)* and the *de facto* reality on the ground. We will see that in many instances, local forest users question the legitimacy of state control and management, and instead orient their forest use practices on traditional (routinised) norms and arrangement – such as *riwaj*.

1.4 Putting natural forests into use

We have seen that most natural forests in Pakistan are located in the Hindukush-Himalayan region. At the very concrete level on the ground, that is the forested hills and valleys of the KP, people use forests in different ways such as collecting branches, cutting trees, grazing their cattle, collecting mushrooms, digging forest soil, etc. (see chapter 2 by Steimann and chapter 4 by Shahbaz and Ali in this volume). These 'people' include farmers and tenants living close to the forests, workers that specialise on making available forest products, etc. And many of these people use forests in the above sketched manner because they directly need these products for heating, cooking, constructing a house, or fertilising fields – while others either sell the products or are employed by 'agents of the market' (a notion to be further discussed below) to make forest products accessible.

This is a very general and rather simple introduction to forestry. But it can inspire some first thoughts. For example: The above sketched practices of forest use are rather universal and apply to many localities on our globe. Still, while they do not lead to an over-exploitation of natural forests in some countries, they do in others. Often it is argued that population pressure is a root cause for deforestation (especially in so-called 'developing countries'). A study by the FAO, though, provides sufficient evidence to show that there is no causal relationship. The authors systematically compared population and forest cover change rates during the period 1990 to 1995 for 168 territorial entities. They found that "no systematic relationship is apparent between these two rates; indeed, the linear correlation coefficient (-0.19) is negligible" (Marcoux, 2000). Similarly Ali and Benjaminsen (2004) showed that local fuelwood collection is not the main cause of deforestation (in Northern Pakistan), instead, the deforestation is primarily due to commercial harvesting and mismanagement by the government.

In other words: Reasons for pressure on forests are to be searched in the *social and economic spheres,* i.e. in the ways forests are being used, and the way how these uses are socially organised, coordinated and managed. Therefore, we distinguish two main areas where our attention needs to be focused on: economic necessities, and forest governance.

1.5 Economic necessities

Again at the very practical level, a lot of timber is cut and wood collected because there is a huge demand for timber and wood in Pakistan, be it locally around the forests of Malakand and Hazara, in the adjoining plains from Peshawar to Rawalpindi, and the huge stretches of land further south. To discuss these needs, we distinguish between subsistence economy, and market economy.

The articles in this book by Bernd Steimann and Babar Shahbaz and Tanvir Ali reveal that fuelwood is of utmost importance for subsistence-oriented livelihoods especially in the highland areas of KP where affordable alternative sources of energy are still missing. However the role of forests in income-oriented strategies is negligible. The articles analyze the forest use patterns in KP and conclude that majority of the respondent households used forest wood for cooking. Due to the non-availability of natural gas and the higher prices of alternate sources of energy like kerosene oil, electricity and gas cylinder the local people had no other option except to use wood for cooking and heating. This usage has become extremely vital after recent fuel price hike where price of kerosene oil has more than doubled in last years. Most of the homes in the high mountain areas are made of wood; therefore, the local people also use forest wood as timber for the construction of new houses or the repair of existing houses. Likewise forest land is also being extensively used for fodder and pasture. Majority of the local communities are, however, not dependent on forests for their cash income. The main source of cash income of the majority of the local people was income received in form of the remittances (domestic and foreign), followed by labour (daily wage), salary and farming.[4]

Various studies ventured to quantify firewood consumption, among them the Forest Sector Master Plan (FSMP, 1992), HESS (1991), PFRI (2000), and the recent study on timber harvesting ban (IC, 2010). Taking an average per capita annual firewood consumption of 0.74 m^2 (or 5.4 m^2 per household),[5] the HESS study estimates an annual firewood requirement for Malakand and Hazara Divisions of 5.0 million m^3. The study estimates that 28.4% of this demand is covered from non-forest lands (bushes in agricultural land, rangelands, thinnings in plantations etc.)

Forest products, though, are needed outside the forested highlands as well. The wood-based industry of Pakistan – generally comprising of furniture, sports goods, construction, plywood, wooden crates and boxes, matches, and paper – relies heavily on a continuous supply of timber. Wooden furniture is manufactured by a large number of small scale and cottage industries spread over rural areas, small towns and cities. Although *shisham* and *poplar* are the dominant species in the furniture making, but the expensive household furniture made of pine trees (such as deodar), and walnut is very popular among upper middle-class families. Due to high cost of imported timber and logs most of the manufacturers rely on the local markets.

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[4] Per-capita income in the mountainous areas of KP is much less than rest of the country and these areas are most food insecure (WFP, 2003).

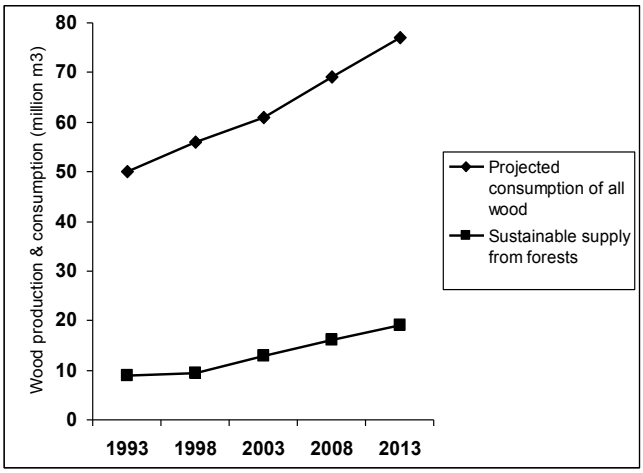
[5] Based on HESS (1991).

There are numerous small scale industries and processing activities in rural mountain areas of KP that use wood as their main fuel. These rural industries and activities include; tobacco curing, *gur* (sugar) making, blacksmithing, goldsmith, pottery making, small-scale brick kilns, milk products, dyeing of wool yarn carpet, and clothes, laundering, road tarring, rural bakeries and ovens, village hotels and restaurants, poultry farms etc. These industries entirely or partially rely on wood from natural forests, private farmlands, biomass and agro-forest residues. Such industries depend either upon locally collected woodfuel and other biomass or from traded sources.

In sum, there exists a huge demand for forests products in the subsistence as well as market fields – but the supply to meet this demand is far below requirements, creating a huge wood supply gap (see Figure 2). One way or the other, this gap needs to be filled, and most sources agree on the resulting *bundle of causes* that put forests under pressure (though the sources vary in the weighting of the respective importance):

- timber harvesting for commercial purposes
- demand for firewood
- illegal felling of trees by poor, locals
- timber mafia.

Figure 2: Wood supply gap in Pakistan (Source: Govt. of Pakistan, 2005)



1.6 Coordinating resource needs – the issue of forest governance

On an (again) simple theoretical plain, these market and subsistence needs should not necessarily and automatically lead to overexploitation of the resource. Supply of, and demand for forest products – even in a liberal market economy – are subject to coordination and management. Here, we use the notion of *forest governance* to refer to societal arrangements to balance the various needs for forest produces among a multitude of stakeholders.

In the Khyber Pakthunkwa Province, such a governance structure exists. The article 3 in this book by Urs Geiser on *State forest administration and donor interventions* shows that a full-

fledged institutional regime is supposed to guide resource use, consisting of a forest administration with detailed policies, laws and rules that prescribe procedures. In the dominant discourse on forest management, the state is perceived as the custodian of this natural resource in the name of the people and the nation as a whole. The state's respective agency (in this case, the KP Forest Department) is thus mandated to manage most forests directly as a state property. To enable it to fulfill this mandate, it is equipped with respective policies, laws, rules, management tools, enforcement powers, finances and person power.

For some time, the problem was perceived as being the Forest Department's limited capacities and skills. Geiser describes how early development projects by foreign donors (e.g. FAO support to the Pakistan Forest Institute in the 1960s, or the Swiss supported Kalam Integrated Development Project – KIDP – in its early phase) provided the state agency with additional finances, trained the available person power, and worked on the improvement of management tools such as forest inventory techniques or Working Plans.

Not leading to many changes in ground realities, research and project experience hinted at other possible reasons for bad forest governance. Among them were the argument of low incentives for the Forest Department's field staff to enforce the prescribed forest management practices – and the need to further strengthen participatory forest management processes. Geiser concludes the paper by describing the emergence of a comprehensive forest sector reform process in the KP since 1995.

The experiences of this reform process are discussed in two articles. Bernd Steimann's article on *Assessing decentralisation efforts* highlights the huge difference between intentions and field reality. In their article on *The impact of joint forest management of rural livelihoods*, Babar Shahbaz and Tanvir Ali report that weak economic incentives, high expectations of the local forest users regarding institutional access to forest resources (such as timber and fuelwood), elites' dominance, communication gaps and – above all – mistrust between local users and Forest Department were some of the factors hindering the participation of the local users in joint forest management (JFM). The article shows that the state-initiated participatory forest management does not overcome these tensions and most of the local people still perceive that the Forest Department is collaborating with the timber mafia and is the sole responsible for the depletion of forests.

1.7 Underlying issues

Both, Steimann and Shahbaz/Ali (in this volume) are identifying first positive developments as a consequence of the forest sector reform process – however, their main findings indicate the enormous difference between the intentions and the reality. This calls for a deeper analysis of underlying causes. In this context, we explore two important dimensions, i.e. the *multitude of stakeholders and stakeholder interests* involved, and the *contested legal status* of the forests and its consequences.

The article in this book by Abid Suleri, Babar Shahbaz and Urs Geiser on *Stakeholders and stakeholders' conflicts in the NWFP* argues that stakeholders have different bargaining power. This shapes the way they interact and the ideologies they use in order to justify their interests.

The article indicates that there are several lines of stakeholder conflicts – conflicts that prevent the development of more sustainable forest management procedures. The participatory initiatives were concentrated at involving multiple stakeholders, but there are many groups of stakeholders as important as well when it comes to the actual use of forests – and they were excluded.

The issue of the contested legal status of the forests emerges from research into the question of legitimacy and trust. The article by Sultan-i-Rome on *Forest governance in Swat: a historical perspective* describes that local residents specifically in the Malakand region often do not accept state regulations, giving historic arguments on competing propriety rights, etc. Based on traditional institutions *(riwaj),* some people still are of the opinion that they are the owners of the forest while others (non-owners, landless) do not seem to be able to claim a customary land title. Those who hold such traditional titles see themselves as being the owners of that land, thus not accepting the legal ownership by the state. This creates a form of 'legal pluralism'.

Legal pluralism can create a situation of unclear regulations – which soon ends in forms of open access regimes. As a matter of fact, high timber prices in Pakistan have made the timber business a lucrative one, and thus illegal timber harvesting became widespread throughout the highlands of the KP province from around 1995. Commercial timber harvesting in Pakistan is banned since 1993, but illegal harvesting continued at an even higher pace. During the same period (around 1995) the notion of 'Timber Mafia' became common in Pakistan. It refers to a network of various actors (political leaders, state forest officials, influential locals and outsiders, businessmen, transporters, police etc.) established with the single purpose of making money from cutting and selling timber illegally. This nexus emerged through the use of certain practices like networking, bribing, rent seeking, black-mailing, buying royalty, and exporting local timber through Afghanistan and re-importing 'foreignised' timber (Geiser, 2000). The Forest Department is blamed by the civil society and local people to be involved in the illegal timber cutting and facilitating the timber mafia (Shahbaz, 2007). And for honest foresters it becomes a quite difficult job to catch the real offenders.[6]

1.8 Attempts at finding solutions

Indeed, the challenges faced by those concerned with the fate of natural forests in KP are huge and the underlying issues, some of which are described in the above section, make 'sustainable forestry' a complex and challenging chore. Many attempts have already been made at finding solutions, and experiences show that many of the prescriptions fail to show success. This refers, for example, to the call for people's participation, or the need to make

[6] During a field interview a Range Forest Officer told that once he caught a truck fully loaded with the wood logs and handed over the offenders to police, but the very next day when he was standing on the roadside a car struck him and as a result his leg was broken. According to him, that car belonged to the timber smugglers who took revenge by hitting him. Another Divisional Forest Officer told "whenever we catch a big criminal, my telephone and personal mobile phone starts ringing with the calls from the influential people who want the release of the offenders" (Shahbaz, 2007).

Forest Department staff 'aware'. Possible ways forward, therefore, need to take these experiences into account.

The article in this book by Shaheen Rafi Khan, Moeed Yusuf and Riaz Ahmed on *Advocacy through civil society* focuses on the role played by one civil society organization – the *Sarhad Awami Forestry Itehad* (SAFI). They show that SAFI has conducted a forceful advocacy campaign in the forestry reform process and created widespread awareness about the reforms, engaging with communities and other relevant stakeholders in consultations and discussions. SAFI also conducted successful organised resistance in Hazara and Dir-Kohistan to support the cause of the disempowered communities. It has also made management interventions bringing the realization among public functionaries that partnership with communities offers prospects for sustainable management of forests. The authors suggest that SAFI should also emphasize in supporting local resistance movements and management interventions. Thus, by organizing itself around forest protection and management SAFI can strengthen linkages with the communities and establish itself as an important player, working in tandem with the Forest Department.

Shafqat Munir, in his paper on *Forestry and newspapers – bridging the gap between policy and practice?* highlights that though the direct impact of local, regional and national newspapers on policy processes related to forestry issues in the KP seems to be rather limited, yet by providing these information, important initiatives such as the *Sarhad Awami Forestry Ittehad* (SAFI) are made known, and the widespread conflicts between various forest stakeholders are made public. The article also indicates that the research done on forestry issues lack outreach in media.

1.9 Challenges ahead

Indeed, those entrusted with the management of forests – and even more so its 'sustainable management' – are facing enormous challenges. In order to grasp the size of the challenge, we distinguish the livelihood-related activities of people living closer to forest areas in KP into subsistence and cash oriented strategies. Forest resources contribute towards the subsistence needs chiefly fuelwood and construction timber. While this dependency puts some pressure on natural forests, it is not the major cause of severe deforestation in KP. These forests are also important for the state in many ways. Quest for sustainable forest governance led to the initiation of participatory form of forest governance, but it faces many challenges. On one hand the so-called inclusive or participatory forest management is not harmonized with the local livelihood realities, and on the other hand benefits of participation (if any) remain limited to few individuals, often being local elites. The institutional reform process was not able to augment the livelihood assets (so called poverty reducing factors) of most of the local people, and as a result they do not see any advantage of being involved in the forest related activities. Any policy around sustainable forest governance has to either strengthen and improve the existing livelihood assets and activities, or create alternative livelihood options. Here it is pertinent to mention that assets may only be transformed into activities in the presence of conducive socio-economic, institutional and political environment. Such

conducive environment seems eroding very fast from this area especially in the context of the crucial geo-political importance that the ongoing war on terrorism had brought to KP.

While considering the issues of livelihoods security and sustainable forest management, one has to face the challenges of asymmetrical power structures, stakeholders' conflicts, economic concerns, etc. The remaining forests of KP are embedded in a highly conflicting arena where various lines of stakeholders are contesting for the access to forests in the view of their vested interests. The system of participatory forest management was not able to reduce the social conflicts among primary stakeholders (state and local forest users) who perceive each other as main threat to forests. No major initiatives have so far been made to engage these stakeholders into meaningful dialogues in a neutral and independent environment. Though some initiatives (stakeholders' dialogues, roundtables etc.) were taken by the Forest Department, donor agencies and NGOs, but most of these were limited in federal and provincial capitals, and mistrust and communication gap exist at the local level (i.e., the areas where we have forests). Civil society organizations like SAFI, local media and research based organizations can play a positive and productive role in an effective dialogue process.

But sustainable forest governance in KP faces another fundamental challenge – a huge *demand-sustainable supply gap* that puts tremendous pressure on forests. Though most of this gap is filled by the trees outside of forests (farm trees) and imports, yet this enormous gap also opens the ways of illegal removal of forest trees. Inefficient state institutions and weak alternative institutions (e.g. joint forest management committees) provide timber mafia with an open access like situation to the forests. Sustainable management of forests in KP necessitates reduction in conflicts around natural resources as well as empowered local communities backed by the state and civil society that would play an assertive role in balancing the extremely skewed power structure around forest management.

So: what can be done to support sustainable forestry, that is, to protect as well as use the forests for the present generation, as well as maintaining them for the needs of future generations? Indeed, we can but reiterate what is being discussed already, such as the need for participatory approaches, political will, institutional reforms, and addressing the timber demand and supply questions. However, there is an utmost need to go beyond the catchwords that circulate in these discussions. With this we refer to the fact that notions such as 'stakeholder' involvement are being repeated again and again, however without taking into account the actual experiences of Pakistan, or in the words of LEAD (2007a: 27): The "lack of continuity and conflicting policies without regard to studying the impacts of previous policies remain an issue".

And it is from these actual realities on the ground and the political everyday life beyond rather detached policy discourses that we re-visit some of the current discussions and their implications:

The need for multi-stakeholder approaches: This is a very crucial and highly central issue in respect to forestry in Pakistan. Most practitioners and researchers agree that the provincial Forest Departments are not in a position to direct forest management without the involvement

of all concerned stakeholders. This is called for, among others, by the former Inspector General of Forests who states that the "conservation of biodiversity and representative ecosystems requires a participatory approach involving all stakeholders" (Wani, 2003: 226). The NWFP Forest Vision 2025 (Govt. of NWFP, 2002: iii) – one of the rare documents that does not seem to have emerged out of donor support – mentions: "The basic shift in approach to forestry (…) is that it must be based on proper land-use planning done by owners and dependent communities under the assistance of the forest staff, and implementation also carried out in the same manner. In this way only, the question of sustainability can be addressed." The same document, though, states: "These renewable resources of the Province are being managed by the NWFP Forests Department *for* the benefit of the local communities, provincial government, national economy and the international community at large" (Govt. of NWFP, 2002: 4; emphasis ours).

It is here where we perceive crucial contradictions. On the one hand, members of the forest authorities agree that a multi-stakeholder approach is required, however, on the other hand, do not implement this need. Though some reports state that the joint forest management approach has been operationalised and institutionalised (e.g. LEAD, 2007b), our findings clearly show that this is not the case. Efforts at joint forest management are not continued (see articles by Shahbaz/Ali and Steimann). Another indication is that the Forest Department was the only department in the KP province that did not join the decentralisation efforts started in 2002 (see article by Steimann).

The need for platforms for multi-stakeholder dialogues: There is also agreement that organisational arrangements are required that foster communication among stakeholders. Recently, and supported by FAO, proposals emerged that new platforms are required towards this end (LEAD, 2007a). However, and with reference to the KP, we argue that such platforms do exist. There is – at least in principle – the Forestry Commission, there is the Forestry Roundtable, there are specific committees of the provincial assembly, etc. Therefore, we propose that the challenge is not to create new platforms, but to actually use the existing ones.

The need for political pressure: Our analysis shows that the forest sector reform process launched in the mid 1990s was by and large controlled by the Forest Department itself. A broader involvement of concerned circles outside the department was prevented by for example not following the ideas of Forest Commission and Forest Roundtable. We thus argue that those people within the administration, that are keen to really reform forest governance, need to be supported by a broader mobilisation outside the department. In other words, groups like SAFI (see article by Khan et al.) are crucial to build pressure for reform from the outside. But such efforts need to be broadened. We understand that forests and sustainability are topics that appear in the manifestos of political parties as well (see annex 6 in Wani, 2003).

Reforming the KP Forest Department: We show in the article by Geiser that the basic ingredients of the KP Forest Department can be traced back to the colonial period. It is the colonial inheritance of the *ésprit de corps* that makes the department a top-down controlled administration, preventing the spread of interest, initiative and courage at the level of its staff members. This *ésprit de corps* is not a mystical phenomena, but it can be located at several

places. We mention two: (i) We argue that the Annual Confidential Report (ACR) is a core instrument to prevent initiative beyond narrow prescriptions. (ii) The curricula of the forestry staff training at the various levels – it is through these curricula that either a top-down, control mentality is made known to the staff, or the ideas of multi-stakeholder approaches.

The need to clarify and redefine forest rights: As we detail specifically in the chapters 5 and 6, the prevailing ownership rights and tenure arrangements regarding forests are either outdated or have never been clarified. "Uncertain property rights discourage tenants or landless and nomadic grazing communities to protect and conserve forest and land resources" (Wani, 2003: 226). We propose that this is of utmost importance, and we find it difficult to understand why it is not being tackled by the responsible authorities right now.

The sensitive issue of donor support: Our analysis continuously highlights the core role played by international donors in 'forest sector reform', and we venture to discuss these phenomena around the notion of 'ownership'. Two positions can be distinguished. On the one hand, development interventions are intrinsically justified by the need of external interventions to induce change. In short, it is only donor pressure that leads to change for the better; see for example this statement regarding the forest sector reform process (by about 2003, almost all the major donors had withdrawn their support to the NWFP Forest Department): "[A]s a result, the outside pressure to institutionalize the reforms diminished" (Gilmour et al., 2008:10).

On the other hand, one can argue that donor support, and especially continued donor support (and pressure) over a long period of time is detrimental to the emergence of 'ownership'. The continued presence of foreign experts and large sums of foreign funding can be a dis-incentive to own initiative. But it can also lead to confusion. As we illustrate in the article by Geiser, the forest sector reform process of the last decade has been characterized by competing visions and interventions by a range of donors.

And last but not least, we argue that specifically regarding forestry, a culture has developed of bypassing the urgency of taking ownership and initiating own action by simply calling again and again (almost ritually) for donor support. Why, for example, should Pakistan "get international support for preparing and implementing national REDD+ actions … [which] include the development of a REDD+ strategy, monitoring system, policy measures, and an incentives mechanism" (IC Pakistan, 2010: 5)? Why can this not be done by the responsible authorities in Pakistan themselves?

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